



'Great day for America': Vaccinated can largely ditch masks

By ZEKE MILLER and
MICHAEL BALSAMO

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a major step toward returning to pre-pandemic life, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention eased mask-wearing guidance for fully vaccinated people on Thursday, allowing them to stop wearing masks outdoors in crowds and in most indoor settings. "Today is a great day for America," President Joe Biden said during a Rose Garden address heralding the new guidance.

"If you are fully vaccinated, you no longer need to wear a mask," he said, summarizing the new guidance and encouraging more Americans to roll up their sleeves. "Get vaccinated — or wear a mask until you do."

The guidance still calls for wearing masks in crowded indoor settings like buses, planes, hospitals, prisons and homeless shelters, but it will help clear the way for re-opening workplaces, schools, and other venues — even removing the need for social distancing for those who are fully vaccinated.

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ABOUT FACE



In this May 11, 2021 photo, Rochelle Walensky, Director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, testifies before a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, Tuesday, May 11, 2021 on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press



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'Great day for America': Vaccinated can largely ditch masks

Continued from Front

"We have all longed for this moment — when we can get back to some sense of normalcy," Rochelle Walensky, director of the CDC, said at an earlier White House briefing.

The CDC and the Biden administration have faced pressure to ease restrictions on fully vaccinated people — those who are two weeks past their last required COVID-19 vaccine dose — in part to highlight the benefits of getting the shot. The country's aggressive vaccination campaign has paid off: U.S. virus cases are at their lowest rate since September, deaths are at their lowest point since last April and the test positivity rate is at the lowest point since the pandemic began.

Walensky said the long-awaited change is thanks to the millions of people who have gotten vaccinated and is based on the latest science about how well those shots are working.

"Anyone who is fully vaccinated can participate in indoor and outdoor activities — large or small — without wearing a mask or physically distancing," Walensky said. "If you are fully vaccinated, you can start doing the things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic."

The new guidance is likely to open the door to confusion, since there is no



President Joe Biden claps with Vice President Kamala Harris after speaking on updated guidance on face mask mandates and COVID-19 response, in the Rose Garden of the White House, Thursday, May 13, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

surefire way for businesses or others to distinguish between those who are fully vaccinated and those who are not. Walensky and Biden said people who are not fully vaccinated should continue to wear masks indoors.

"We've gotten this far — please protect yourself until you get to the finish line," Biden said, noting that most Americans under 65 are not yet fully vaccinated. He said the government was not going to enforce the mask wearing guidance on those not yet fully vaccinated.

"We're not going to go out

and arrest people," added Biden, who said he believes the American people want to take care of their neighbors. "If you haven't been vaccinated, wear your mask for your own protection and the protection of the people who also have not been vaccinated yet." The announcement came as many states and communities have already been lifting mask mandates amid improving virus numbers and as more Americans have been shedding face coverings after getting shots.

Dan Witte, a 67-year-old musician from Sioux Falls,

South Dakota, stopped wearing a mask after receiving the vaccine two months ago and recently rejoined his band playing gigs at crowded bars and weddings. He was encouraged by the CDC's new guidance, but said it just confirmed his trust that the vaccines offered protection from spreading infections.

"I went right from being hypervigilant for almost a year to being right in the crowd without a mask," Witte said. To date about 154 million Americans, more than 46% of the population, have received at least one dose

of COVID-19 vaccine, and more than 117 million are fully vaccinated. The rate of new vaccinations has slowed in recent weeks, but with the authorization Wednesday of the Pfizer shot for children ages 12 to 15, a new burst of doses is expected in the coming days.

"All of us, let's be patient, be patient with one another," Biden said, acknowledging some Americans might be hesitant about removing their masks after more than a year of living in a pandemic that has killed more than 580,000 people in the U.S. and more than 3.3 million people worldwide.

The CDC's announcement that Americans could begin to shed one of the most visible symbols of the pandemic stood in stark contrast to other nations, with much of the world still struggling to contain the virus amid global disparities in vaccinations.

Just two weeks ago, the CDC recommended that fully vaccinated people continue to wear masks indoors in all settings and outdoors in large crowds.

Walensky said that evidence from the U.S. and Israel shows the vaccines are as strongly protective in real world use as they were in earlier studies and that so far they continue to work even though some worrying mutated versions of the virus are spreading. □

Gaetz associate expected to plead guilty in federal case

By **MICHAEL BALSAMO and MIKE SCHNEIDER**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A key figure in the federal investigation of Republican Rep. Matt Gaetz is expected to plead guilty to criminal charges next week.

Joel Greenberg will appear Monday in federal court in Orlando, Florida, for a change of plea hearing, according to court documents. He had been working for weeks toward a deal with federal prosecu-

tors who are investigating sex trafficking and public corruption allegations.

The plea potentially escalates the legal and political jeopardy the Florida congressman is facing and signals that Greenberg could potentially serve as a witness in the Justice Department's investigation into Gaetz.

Federal prosecutors are examining whether Gaetz and Greenberg paid underage girls or offered them gifts in exchange for

sex, according to people familiar with the matter. Gaetz has vehemently denied the allegations and any wrongdoing and insists he will not resign his seat in Congress.

Investigators have also been looking at whether Gaetz and his associates tried to secure government jobs for some of the women, the people said. They are also scrutinizing Gaetz's connections to the medical marijuana sector, including whether his associates

sought to influence legislation Gaetz sponsored.

The people had knowledge of the investigation but spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because they were not allowed to publicly discuss the ongoing investigation.

Greenberg's legal problems began last summer when he was arrested on charges of stalking a political opponent. He mailed fake letters to the school where his opponent taught, signed by a non-

existent "very concerned student" who alleged the teacher had engaged in sexual misconduct with another student, according to an indictment filed against him.

Greenberg was charged in August with sex trafficking a girl between ages 14 and 17 and using a state database to look up information about the girl and other people with whom he was engaged in "sugar daddy" relationships, according to the indictment. □

Pipeline hack fuels gas crunch; U.S. suspects Russian origins

By TOM FOREMAN JR., JEFF MARTIN and BEN FINLEY
Associated Press
CLEMMONS, N.C. (AP) —

Motorists found gas pumps shrouded in plastic bags at tapped-out service stations across more than a dozen U.S. states Thursday while the operator of the nation's largest gasoline pipeline reported making "substantial progress" in resolving the computer hack-induced shutdown responsible for the empty tanks.

Nearly 70% of North Carolina's gas stations were still without fuel amid panic-buying. More than half the stations in Virginia were tapped out, as were about half the stations in South Carolina and Georgia, GasBuddy.com reported. Washington, D.C., was among the hardest-hit locations, with 73% of stations out, the site's tracking service showed.

President Joe Biden said Thursday that U.S. officials do not believe the Russian government was involved in the hack of the Colonial Pipeline, which stretches from Texas to New Jersey. But he added, "We do have strong reason to believe that the criminals who did the attack are living in Russia. That's where it came from."

A cyberattack by hackers who lock up computer systems and demand a ransom to release them hit



A customer helps pumping gas at Costco, as other wait in line, on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, in Charlotte, N.C. A customer helps pumping gas at Costco, as other wait in line, on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, in Charlotte, N.C.

Associated Press

the pipeline on Friday. The hackers did not take control of the pipeline's operations, but Colonial shut it down to contain the damage.

The U.S. was in direct communication with Moscow about the need to take action against ransom networks, Biden said. The FBI has said the ransomware belonged to a criminal syndicate known as DarkSide. After restarting operations Wednesday, Georgia-based Colonial Pipeline said in a Thursday update that gasoline deliveries

were underway in most of its markets. Gas was flowing again across most of the Deep South, and segments that were offline in the Mid-Atlantic region were expected to gear up again, the company said.

The Northeast has seen fewer shortages since those states get more of their gas supplies from ocean tankers and other sources. The Colonial Pipeline delivers about 45% of the gasoline consumed on the East Coast, but there were no gasoline shortages, according to government of-

ficials and energy analysts, just delays in delivering the fuel from Gulf Coast refineries.

"We are not out of the woods yet, but the trees are thinning out," Richard Joswick, global head of oil analytics at S&P Global Platts, said.

Gas stations should be back to normal next week, though, if the pipeline restart goes as planned and consumers are convinced that they no longer need to panic-buy fuel, Joswick said. He estimated that full recovery for the East and

Gulf coasts would take at least a couple of weeks.

In Virginia, however, the pipeline shutdown still produced palpable effects Thursday. Stephen Brich, the Virginia Department of Transportation highways commissioner, said the agency is limiting non-essential travel and asking its employees to continue working remotely as a conservation strategy. The decision impacts about 4,000 workers.

Workers are still responding to emergency issues such as potholes, malfunctioning traffic signals, guard rail problems, drainage issues and bridge issues. There are sufficient supplies of unleaded and diesel fuel to maintain services for several more weeks, Brich said. The run on gas also prompted an urgent warning in the state that people should never siphon gasoline off by mouth with hoses, an advisory that followed calls in recent days about people who were poisoned. One man sucked gasoline into his lungs, causing significant distress, Dr. Chris Holstege, the medical director of the Blue Ridge Poison center at UVA Health, said. The governors of both Virginia and North Carolina declared states of emergency to help ensure access to gasoline. Other governors urged people not to hoard supplies. □

Tim Tebow, Tennessee gov unveil anti-human trafficking push

By JONATHAN MATTISE
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Former NFL player Tim Tebow joined Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee at the state Capitol on Thursday to announce a multimillion-dollar partnership to fight human trafficking.

Tebow, who is considering a return to football with the Jacksonville Jaguars, is due for an infusion of \$1.2 million into his foundation in the upcoming Tennessee state budget. The annual spending plan, which tops \$42 billion, is sending more than \$5 million combined to Tebow's organization

and other groups to combat human trafficking. The funding will help a ministry within the Tim Tebow Foundation, named Her Song, which seeks to build safe homes in the state alongside other funded organizations, Tebow said. The rest of the funding goes to other groups that help survivors of human trafficking in the state. "We hope that this will facilitate and engage and inspire churches, nonprofits, organizations, individuals, to find out how they can be involved in rescuing women and children in Tennessee," Lee said. Tebow

said the discussions on the issue began less than three months ago when country music star Luke Bryan and his wife Caroline introduced him to the governor's chief of staff, Blake Harris, at Bryan's restaurant. Tebow, a former Florida star and 2007 Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback, is expected to sign a one-year contract to play for the Jacksonville Jaguars as a tight end, according to an NFL Network report Monday. Tebow declined to discuss that Thursday when asked whether he would be signing with the team. □



Former NFL player Tim Tebow, center, talks with Margie Quin, CEO of End Slavery Tennessee, as Gov. Bill Lee, right, speaks with Shelia McClain, director of residential services at Thistle Farms, on Thursday, May 13, 2021, after announcing a partnership to fight human trafficking in Tennessee during a news conference at the state Capitol, in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

'Amazing': Pilots, passenger uninjured after midair crash

By **PATTY NIEBERG**

Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — The pilot of an airplane that collided with another midair near Denver requested emergency landing for engine failure, not knowing that his plane was nearly ripped in half, according to air traffic control audio. Miraculously, both planes landed and no one was hurt, officials said. The planes were getting ready to land at a small regional airport in a Denver suburb on Wednesday when they collided, according to the National Transportation Safety Board and South Metro Fire Rescue. The pilot that requested emergency landing was the only person aboard a twin-engine Fairchild Metroliner that landed at Centennial Airport despite major damage to its tail section. The plane is owned by a Colorado-based Key Lime Air, which operates cargo aircraft. "Looks like the right engine failed so I'm gonna continue my landing here," the pilot said in an audio clip



This image from CBS Denver shows a Key Lime Air Metroliner that landed safely at Centennial Airport after a mid-air collision near Denver on Wednesday, May 12, 2021.

Associated Press

with air traffic control.

The second plane, a single-engine 2016 Cirrus SR22, was rented by Independence Aviation, the company said in a statement. Its pilot successfully deployed an airframe parachute system designed by Cirrus Aircraft to slow the craft's descent after a collision.

The Cirrus plane had a pilot and one passenger on board when the pilot deployed a red-and-white parachute and drifted down to a safe landing in a field near homes in Cherry

Creek State Park, Arapahoe County sheriff's Deputy John Bartmann said.

"Every one of these pilots needs to go buy a lottery ticket right now," Bartmann said.

"I don't remember anything like this — especially everybody walking away. I mean that's the amazing part of this."

Christopher T. O'Neil, a spokesperson for The National Transportation Safety Board, a federal agency investigating the collision said he expects to have an

update Thursday on the incident.

June Cvelbar told the KUSA TV station that she witnessed the collision while walking in a state park.

"I saw two planes in the sky. I saw a larger green plane, which I thought was a tow plane, along with what I thought was a glider being towed by it. I heard a noise but didn't realize that the two planes had collided," she told KUSA in an email.

Cvelbar said she saw the green plane fly off and shortly after saw the smaller plane deploy its parachute. She said she initially thought it was a training exercise.

"When I realized that the small plane was going down I ran toward it. The pilot and his passenger were up and about," Cvelbar said.

Shelly Whitehead told KCNC-TV that she was in her kitchen when she heard a loud bang that sounded like a firecracker. She ran out onto her patio and saw the plane that deployed the parachute coming down in the field

behind her house.

"I thought, 'Is it somebody just jumping out of a plane?' And then I realized the parachute was attached to a plane," she said. "I thought for sure they weren't going to make it out of there."

Both Key Lime Air, a passenger and cargo charter company, and Independence Aviation, a flight school and aircraft rental firm that owns the Cirrus airplane, are based outside Centennial Airport, one of the busiest general aviation airports in Colorado.

"At this time, we are allowing the NTSB and FAA to conduct their investigation," said a statement issued by Derek Severns of the Cirrus Platinum Training Center, a pilot training center.

Authorities did not immediately identify the people who were in the planes.

The National Transportation Safety Board said on Twitter that it was sending staff to investigate. Key Lime Air will cooperate with the investigation, the company said in a statement. □

Philly health official forced to resign over MOVE cremations



In this Feb. 3, 2021, file photo, Philadelphia Health commissioner Dr. Tom Farley, left, speaks with members of the media as Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney listens during a news conference at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Philadelphia's top health official was compelled to resign Thursday after the city's mayor said he learned human remains from the 1985 bombing of the headquarters of a Black organization had been cremated and dis-

posed of without notifying family members.

Mayor Jim Kenney said in a statement that Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley decided to cremate and dispose of the remains of the MOVE bombing victims several years ago.

In a statement released by the mayor's office, Farley said that in early 2017 he was told by the city's medical examiner, Dr. Sam Gulino, that a box had been found containing materials related to MOVE bombing victims' autopsies.

"In the box were bones and bone fragments, presumably from one or more of the victims," Farley said. It is a standard procedure to retain specimens after an autopsy ends and the remains are turned over to the decedent's next-of-kin, Farley said.

"Believing that investigations related to the MOVE bombing had been completed more than 30 years earlier, and not wanting to cause more anguish for the families of the victims, I authorized Dr. Gulino to follow this procedure and dispose of the bones and

bone fragments," Farley said.

The decision was his alone, and other top city officials were not consulted, he said.

After recent reports that local institutions had remains of MOVE bombing victims, Farley said he reconsidered his actions and notified higher-ups.

"I profoundly regret making this decision without consulting the family members of the victims and I extend my deepest apologies for the pain this will cause them," Farley wrote.

Kenney said Farley's decision lacked empathy. Gulino has also been put on leave pending an investigation, Kenney said.

Philadelphia police attempting to serve warrants on four members and evict the rest of the Black back-to-nature

group from its headquarters in the city bombed it, igniting fuel for a generator. The fire spread to more than 60 row homes. Among the 11 slain were five children.

Kenney said he informed family members about what officials did with the remains. Thursday is the 36th anniversary of the bombing.

"Today, I had the opportunity to meet with members of the Africa family and apologize for the way this situation was handled, and for how the city has treated them for the last five decades," Kenney said.

MOVE members took the surname Africa after the group's founder, John Africa.

Kenney said Farley took responsibility and resigned. The city has hired a law firm to investigate. □

On Eid, Xinjiang imams defend China against U.S. criticism

By KEN MORITSUGU

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Muslim leaders from the Xinjiang region rejected Western allegations that China is suppressing religious freedom, speaking at a reception Thursday for foreign diplomats and media at the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

The event was the latest in a series of moves by the Chinese government to counter accusations of human rights abuses in Xinjiang. It came a day after human rights groups and Western nations met and demanded unfettered access for U.N. human rights experts to the region and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken condemned China for "crimes against humanity and genocide against Muslim Uyghurs" during the release of an annual report on international religious freedom.

The Uyghurs are a mostly Muslim ethnic group in Xinjiang, a remote northwest region where China has been accused of mass incarcerations, forced labor and forced sterilization in recent years as it imposed a strict security regime after a series of militant attacks. Echoing the government line, the president of the Xinjiang Islamic Association said China had eradicated the breeding ground for ex-



Abdureqip Tomurniyaz, who heads the association and the school for Islamic studies in Xinjiang, speaks during a government reception held for the Eid al-Fitr festival in Beijing on Thursday, May 13, 2021.

tremism by improving livelihoods, teaching people about the law and setting up vocational training and education centers. Foreign analysts say the centers are part of a detention system that has locked up an estimated 1 million people or more over time.

Abdureqip Tomurniyaz, who heads the association and the school for Islamic studies in Xinjiang, accused anti-China forces in the U.S. and other Western nations of spreading rumors and lies.

"They want to sabotage

Xinjiang's harmony and stability, contain China's rise and alienate relations between China and Islamic countries," he said.

He also said the U.S. is turning a blind eye to its own human rights violations, citing the U.S. involvement in conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and other Muslim countries and anti-Muslim discrimination at home.

Religious leaders from five mosques spoke at the 90-minute presentation, three in person and two by video. They all described prayers and feasting for Eid

al-Fitr and rejected criticism of China's religious policies. Videos showed men praying inside mosques and people dancing in squares outside.

Mamat Juma, the imam of the historic Id Kah mosque in the city of Kashgar, said all ethnic groups in Xinjiang support the steps taken to combat terrorism.

He said people are grateful to the ruling Communist Party for restoring stability and promoting economic growth.

At a daily briefing Thursday afternoon, Chinese Foreign

Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said Wednesday's meeting was based on "lies and political bias," and accused participating nations of ignoring their own histories of prejudice and racism.

"The conference was full of monstrous lies and disinformation, and was another clumsy performance and outright political farce by the United States and a few other countries that have no bottom lines," Hua said. Hua said China was not denying unfettered access to Xinjiang for the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights because it had anything to hide, but because of the likelihood that any resulting reports would be distorted.

"I would like to ask that if someone falsely accuses and frames you with lies and then brutally and unreasonably demands you open your door unconditionally and allow them to go to your home and rummage through your closet, will you allow? This is not about facts, but about sovereignty and dignity," Hua said.

"China welcomes all unbiased people from all countries to visit Xinjiang but is firmly opposed to so-called investigations that are based on rumors and lies and presumption of guilt," Hua said. □

Associated Press

Canada's largest province keeps ban on outdoor recreation

By ROB GILLIES

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Ontario's premier is keeping outdoor recreational activities like golf courses closed for at least two more weeks despite calls by health officials to resume them for physical and mental health.

Premier Doug Ford on Thursday extended what he calls a "stay-at-home" order for Canada's largest province until at least June 2. Retail stores are open for curbside pickup and highways and roads are busy, but restaurants — including outdoor patios — are closed, as are in-class schooling and gyms. Most

nonessential workers are working from home amid a third wave of coronavirus infections fueled by variants. The Ontario Medical Association released a statement this week stressing the importance of outdoor recreational facilities such as golf courses, tennis and basketball courts in improving physical and mental health. Golf Ontario started a campaign called "LetUsPlay." Ontario is the only jurisdiction in North America where golf is not allowed.

"There's nothing wrong with golfing. The problem is the mobility, then after golf they have a few pops.

That's the problem," Ford said. But Dr. Isaac Bogoch, an infectious disease scientist at the University of Toronto, said he's still frustrated about limiting outdoor activities. "These are safe & should be encouraged," Bogoch tweeted.

Dr. Andrew Morris, a professor of infectious diseases at the University of Toronto, agreed. Backlash from police, health experts and the public last month prompted Ford to retract restrictions that closed playgrounds and allowed police to require anyone not at home to explain why they're out. Vaccinations have ramped up in



A closed Lakeview Golf Course facility is shown during the COVID-19 pandemic in Mississauga, Ontario, on Wednesday, May 12, 2021.

Associated Press

Canada, with at least 50% of eligible adults in Toronto having received at least one dose. The province ex-

pects 65% of those eligible in Ontario to have at least one dose by the end of the month. □

Hard-liner Ahmadinejad again seeks to be Iran's president

By **NASSER KARIMI** and **JON GAMBRELL**

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's former hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad registered Wednesday to run again for the Islamic Republic's presidency, raising the possibility that the populist leader who rapidly advanced Tehran's nuclear program to challenge the West could return to the country's top civilian post. Ahmadinejad's attempt to run again in 2017 disregarded the words of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who had warned the firebrand, Holocaust-questioning politician his standing for office would be a "polarized situation" that would be "harmful for the county."

This time, however, Khamenei seemingly isn't directly challenging the candidacy of the 64-year-old former Tehran mayor, who joins a wide-open election to replace the relatively moderate President Hassan Rouhani. A council Khamenei oversees ultimately will determine if Ahmadinejad and other hopefuls can run in the June 18 poll.

As Iran negotiates with world powers over its tattered nuclear deal amid tensions with the U.S., the entry of Ahmadinejad could enliven an election that Iranians so far appear unenthusiastic about during the coronavirus pandemic and crushing sanc-



Former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad flashes victory sign while registering his name as a candidate for the June 18, presidential elections at elections headquarters of the Interior Ministry in Tehran, Iran, Wednesday, May 12, 2021.

Associated Press

tions.

Thronged by shouting supporters, Ahmadinejad marched to a registration center at the Interior Ministry, where he filled out registration forms. He held up his hands in a "V for Victory" salute before addressing reporters.

"My presence today for registration was based on demand by millions for my participation in the election," he said, adding that the move also came after "considering the situation of the country, and the necessity for a revolution in the management of the country."

Ahmadinejad previously

served two four-year terms from 2005 to 2013. Under Iranian law, he became eligible to run again after four years out of office, but he remains a polarizing figure, even among fellow hard-liners. His disputed re-election in 2009 sparked massive "Green Movement" protests and a sweeping crackdown in which thousands of people were detained and dozens were killed.

Abroad, he became a caricature of Western perceptions of the Islamic Republic's worst attributes, such as questioning the Holocaust, insisting Iran had no gay or lesbian citizens and

hinting Iran could build a nuclear weapon if it chose to do so.

But Ahmadinejad remains popular among the poor for his populist efforts and home-building programs. Since leaving office, he's raised his profile via a social media presence and written widely publicized letters to world leaders. He's also criticized government corruption, though his own administration faced graft allegations and two of his former vice presidents were jailed.

Unlike 2017, however, Khamenei hasn't warned Ahmadinejad off the campaign and is even signaling

he'll remain silent about his opinions.

"In past elections, those who wanted to become a candidate came and asked me 'Do you agree?'" Khamenei said in a video-conference speech Tuesday night to Iranian university students. "This year I said I won't even say that." Iran opened registration for the presidential election on Tuesday, kicking off the race as uncertainty looms over Tehran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers and tensions remain high with the West. It will run through Saturday.

Also registering Wednesday was Rostam Ghasemi, who served as oil minister under Ahmadinejad and as a general in Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. Hard-liners have increasingly suggested a former military commander should be president given the country's problems, something that hasn't happened since Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution and the purge of the armed forces that followed.

"A large portion of the people have gotten below the poverty line. I think mottos like 'it can be done' or 'it must be done' belong to the past," Ghasemi told journalists. "God willing, with the experience gained from the past, the people will not give the helm of the country to people that haven't even navigated a boat before." □

Anniversary of JP2 attack marked as Poles grapple with abuse

ROME (AP) — The Vatican marked the 40th anniversary of the attempt on the

life of St. John Paul II with a Mass on Thursday, amid muted commemorations in



In this Wednesday, May 12, 2021 file photo, Pope Francis arrives in the St. Damaso Courtyard at the Vatican for his weekly general audience.

Associated Press

Poland where the Catholic hierarchy is grappling with a legacy of failures to confront clergy sexual abuse. Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, John Paul's closest aide, celebrated the morning Mass at the tomb of John Paul inside St. Peter's Basilica. Dziwisz recalled how John Paul fell into his arms after he was shot during an audience in St. Peter's Square by Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Agca on May 13, 1981.

John Paul survived, forgave Agca and met with him in prison. Dziwisz, John Paul's private secretary and later

the archbishop of Krakow — now retired — noted in his homily that Rome has often witnessed hard-to-understand aggressions or attacks on the church — a possible reference to the criticism currently being leveled against the Polish hierarchy.

Pope Francis has removed or given early retirement to a handful of Polish bishops who were accused of covering up sex abuse by their priests. Just this week, Francis accepted the resignation of the bishop of Bydgoszcz, Jan Tyrawa, after an investigation into

allegations of negligence handling abuse cases.

Tyrawa was mentioned in TV documentaries in Poland about alleged sex abuse by priests and cover-up by their superiors. The allegations have come as a shock in the predominantly Roman Catholic country. Francis, for his part, noted the anniversary during his Wednesday general audience. Addressing Poles, Francis recalled that John Paul repeatedly said he owed his life to the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima, to whom he was particularly devoted. □

UK apologizes for 1971 Belfast deaths; families want more

By DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The families of 10 civilians killed during a British military operation in Belfast half a century ago sharply criticized Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday after he sent a member of his Cabinet to Parliament to apologize for the deaths, instead of doing so himself.

Their outrage came after Northern Ireland Secretary Brandon Lewis told the House of Commons that the government “profoundly regrets and is truly sorry” for the deaths in the Ballymurphy area of west Belfast in 1971.

Lewis spoke two days after a coroner’s court ruled that the victims were “entirely innocent.” Johnson sent a letter of apology to the victims’ families, but he hasn’t spoken publicly on the matter.

“Our loved ones were murdered by the state,” said John Teggart, whose father was killed at Ballymurphy. “The head of state is Boris Johnson so he should be standing (in) Parliament, speaking to us, speaking to the world, that is the way you do things. This government has acted disgracefully.”

High Court Justice Siobhan Keegan ruled Tuesday that the nine men and one woman killed in Ballymurphy were innocent victims who weren’t engaged in paramilitary activity at the time they were shot. The



In this Tuesday May 11, 2021 file photo, family members of the victims react after the inquest in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

dead included a mother of eight and a Catholic priest who was waving a white handkerchief as a sign of peace while assisting a wounded man.

On Thursday, Lewis told lawmakers that families of the victims shouldn’t have had to wait 50 years for justice.

“The events of Ballymurphy should never have happened, the families of those who were killed should never have had to experience the grief and trauma of that loss,” he said.

Johnson delivered his apology in a letter to the families, declaring that the “duty of the state is to hold itself to the highest standard, and that requires us

to recognize the hurt and agony caused when we fall short of those standards.”

The coroner’s verdict comes as veterans’ groups pressure the British government to block the prosecution of former soldiers, many now in their 70s and 80s, for their actions during the violence in Northern Ireland known as The Troubles. In recent weeks the six-county region that is part of the U.K. has been rocked by violent protests fueled by anger over the perceived unfair enforcement of coronavirus restrictions and concerns about Britain’s departure from the European Union.

More than 3,000 people died during three decades

of conflict between mostly Catholic supporters of unification with the Republic of Ireland and mostly Protestant backers of continued links with the United Kingdom.

The killings in Ballymurphy occurred over three days in August 1971 as the British Army sought to implement a new government policy that allowed for the arrest and internment without trial of suspected militants. Violence flared when protesters confronted soldiers who had moved into the largely Catholic area to arrest suspected members of the Irish Republican Army. Keegan found that soldiers used disproportionate force against the victims

and violated rules of engagement in force at the time. Authorities failed to adequately investigate the deaths immediately after they occurred, she said.

Nine of the victims were killed by soldiers, though there wasn’t enough evidence to determine who fired the shots that killed the tenth, the court ruled.

The victims’ families had fought for decades for a new inquiry to clear the names of their loved ones after earlier inquests proved inconclusive, fueling suggestions that the victims were somehow responsible for the shootings. Johnson’s failure to appear before Parliament is in contrast to the actions of former Prime Minister David Cameron after a public inquiry found that British troops were responsible for the deaths of 13 protesters in 1972.

Cameron gave a public statement in the Commons, which was beamed to thousands gathered in a public square in Londonderry — also known as Derry — to admit that British troops were fully at fault for what is now known as Bloody Sunday. Many locals, long distrustful of British leaders, wept at the act of contrition.

Teggart insisted that he expected an apology from Johnson. “We’ll not be rushing him, just whenever he is ready, he can come and speak to the families,” he said. □

Bosnian Serb ex-leader Karadzic to spend life in U.K. prison

LONDON (AP) — Former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, sentenced to life for war crimes and genocide, will serve his sentence in a U.K. prison, the British government said Wednesday. Karadzic, 75, is one of the chief architects of the slaughter and devastation of Bosnia’s 1992-95 war. He was convicted by a U.N. court in 2016 of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes — for atrocities in-

cluding the massacre of 8,000 Muslim men and boys by Bosnian Serb troops at Srebrenica. He was sentenced to 40 years in prison, later increased to life by appeals judges at the court in The Hague.

He is currently in the court’s detention unit, but will be moved to an unspecified U.K. prison.

British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said Karadzic “was responsible for the massacre of men,

women and children at the Srebrenica genocide and helped prosecute the siege of Sarajevo with its remorseless attacks on civilians.”

“We should take pride in the fact that, from U.K. support to secure his arrest, to the prison cell he now faces, Britain has supported the 30-year pursuit of justice for these heinous crimes,” Raab said.

The conflict in Bosnia was Europe’s bloodiest since World War II, leaving



In this Wednesday, March 20, 2019 file photo, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic enters the court room of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals in The Hague, Netherlands.

Associated Press

100,000 dead and millions homeless. □

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Aruba Health & Happiness Code' Gold Certification to protect visitors' travel experience

ORANJESTAD — Back in May of 2020, the Aruba Tourism Authority (A.T.A) and the Department of Public Health announced the 'Aruba Health & Happiness Code', a stringent cleaning and hygiene certification program that is mandatory for all tourism related businesses across the country.

The 'Aruba Health & Happiness Code' certification provides assurance that each business has taken every measure to offer a safe environment for employees and guests. The certification seal of approval will be displayed prominently on all tourism related businesses, and the certified businesses will also

be found on the Department of Public Health website.

Aruba's health and safety protocols will provide a seamlessly secure and clean experience for visitors at every touchpoint, upon arrival in Aruba. The Aruba Airport Authority has worked with the Department of Public Health and followed World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines to implement numerous measures such as screening, temperature checks, on-site medical professionals, social distance markers and additional shields and safeguards, mandatory PPE training for all staff, and more.

As visitors depart the airport, they will find the 'Aruba Health & Happiness Code' certification seal of approval on taxis/transport and on all businesses that fall into the sectors of accommodations, food and beverage, restaurants and bars, casinos, retail shops, and tour operators. The Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association has distributed their "Best Practices" guide to hotels which elevates the existing cleaning protocols to new norms for all areas including luggage handling, elevator safety, housekeeping guidelines, food & beverage service, casinos and more. Visitors can expect such measures as plexiglass barriers

at desks, digital keys and contactless check-in, thorough disinfecting of all public spaces and rooms, and more. These protocols to safeguard visitors and locals also extend to national parks and tourism attractions. In order to receive visitors, all businesses must adhere to these protocols and receive on-site inspection and approval from the Department of Inspection and Hygiene to be awarded with the Aruba Health & Happiness Code gold certification seal.

In order to help participating companies to promote their businesses, the Aruba



Tourism office are giving companies the opportunity to be added to their website www.aruba.com and be illustrated under the category 'Things to do' or 'Plan your visit'. This way the visitor can have easy and direct access to any service they are interested in.

For more information visit www.aruba.com. □

Aruba to me is....

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. □

For today we received a wonderful picture from **Irene Cicio** with this great story behind it.

Irene Cicio was relaxing in the pool at the Renaissance Oceanview Suites when suddenly Glen, who's a long time timeshare guests at this resort shouted "Look up." There was this amazingly beautiful Sun Halo. Everyone ran out of the pool to admire this magnificent natural phenomenon.

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Governor receives Consul General of the United States of America

ORANJESTAD — On Monday, May 10, 2021, the Governor of Aruba, His Excellency Alfonso Boekhoudt, received Mr. Allan Greenberg, Consul General of the United States of America, for an audience at Cas Ceremonial di Gobernador.

After an earlier audience in August 2019, this was the second time that the Governor and Mr. Greenberg spoke. During the visit, the developments surrounding the Covid situation were discussed and topics of mutual interest to both the United States and Aruba were discussed.



Bringing to live our inner reality



By Natusha Croes
ORANJESTAD — Join local artist, Natusha Croes, in this exciting workshop where she will teach you and guide you into the realization of your inner realities through LIVE ART.

Teaching and guiding an artistic process of self-revelation and realization that enables them to create a portal to externalize their inner dimension. Tapping

upon different mediums of externalization of their dreams, notions, feelings and ideas through text, drawing, sketching, image making. Which will serve as clues to connect and share what lives in them. From then onwards I will stimulate the materialization and finally the activation of their inner reality into the outside world.

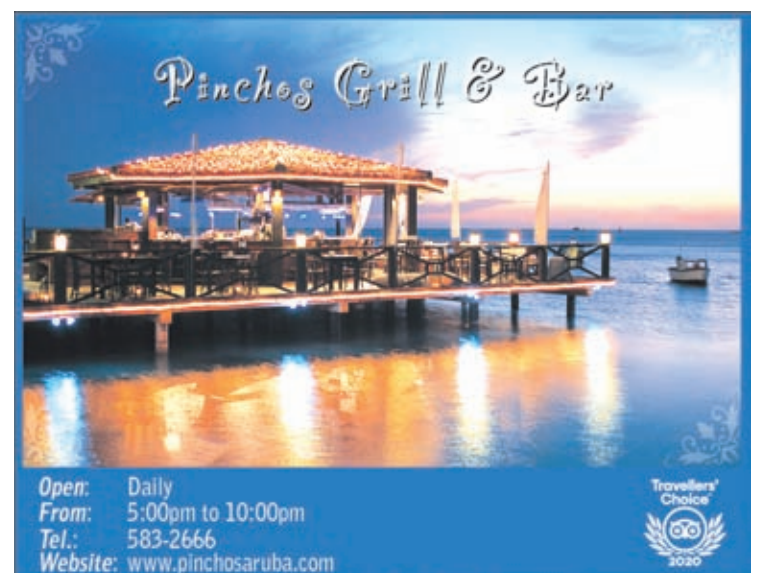
Through the format of 3D design such as prop-mak-

ing, installation, set design created for the intention to perform the activation of their inner realities. This item or dimension of creation will be activated using performative actions that bring into LIFE their inner reality. And will be presented in the end either through the format of film or performance. Presenting thus a new poetic reality.

The workshop will empower each student to dive deep inside their sense of self in search for the creative force that enables them to externalize who they think they are as people and creators. A courageous multidisciplinary journey of self-discovery brought to LIFE through ART.

The workshop will take place from May 18 Starting Monday May 17th, 2021 up till June 11th, 2021 at Ateliers '89 located at Dominicanessenstraat in Oranjestad

On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday from 6pm-9pm. Enroll by sending an email to Elvis@ateliers89.org or call +297 5654613 or +297-5885776. □

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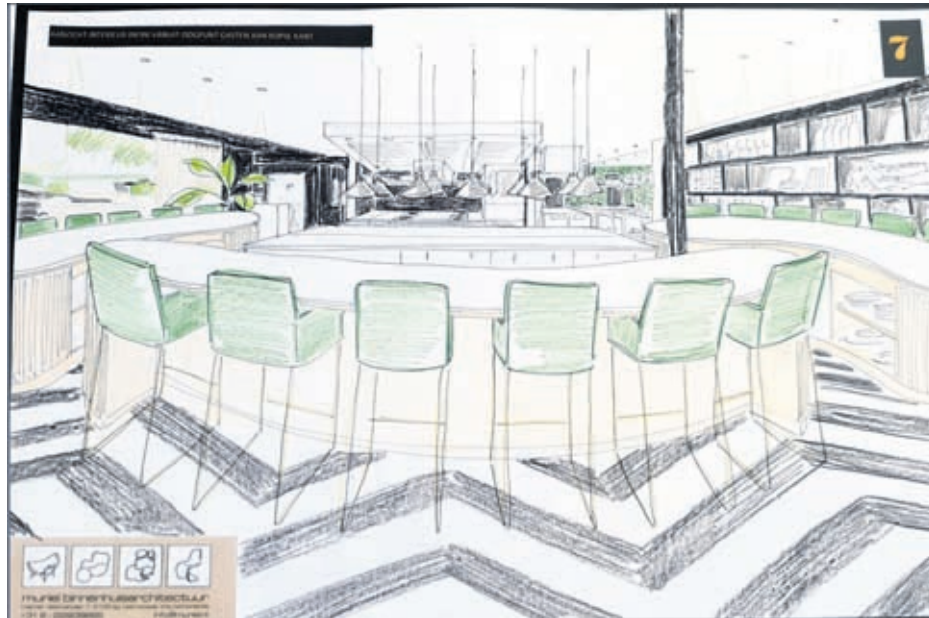
New beginnings after the kitchen table and beyond with new restaurant: Infini by Chef Urvin Croes

PALM BEACH — After spearheading The Kitchen Table for five years, receiving notable recognitions in USA Today, The Daily Meal and earning the #1 spot on Tripadvisor's list of Fine Dining Restaurants in the Caribbean, Chef Urvin Croes has now moved on to higher heights. Infini, his new chef's table, which opened at the Blue Residences in November 2020, allows the Michelin-trained Aruban culinary artist to create gastronomic experiences unconfined by cultural or regional expectations. The former The Kitchen Table space has since been renovated into a suitable culinary studio to host this vision. In describing these changes, Croes says: "We opened up the entire kitchen and elevated the dining tables so guests have a front row stadium-like view of each step of the preparations. The spotlights, which we carefully choreograph, follow the plates' transition from blank canvas into culinary works of art."

"It is a flavor that you cannot define, but you can create."

He had been sitting on the first menu for over a year. Inspired by umami, one of the five basic tastes, and also Japanese for "essence of deliciousness", Chef Croes strived to organically produce this palate in each dish of the eight-course Chef's Impression. "It is a flavor that you cannot define, but you can create. Take our popular langoustine for example; we combined elements that are rarely paired together: the bitter, sour and salty flavors of the lemon cream, kombucha, green grapes, watercress and achiote, fused with the sweet and delicate taste of the langoustine induce ultimate umami."

After hosting the first menu for three months, the Executive Chef introduced a second tour de force in February 2021 — this time a pes-



catarian menu dedicated to Lent, of which Croes has to say: "I wanted to focus on the finest fish in the world, they are the protagonists of this season." Visitors can experience the second Chef's Impression until May 2021, at which point Croes and his team will reveal exciting new flavors for the summer.

"Without a great team, there is no great chef"

"There is very little I can do by myself. Without a great team, there is no great chef", says Croes, while raving about the six young professionals sharing his kitchen. All graduates of Aruba's EPI College and familiar faces to the Chef as each one has completed their culinary internship under his guidance. In fact, Infini's Chef de Cuisine, Ashwin Maduro, was Urvin's very first student, before relocating to Amsterdam, where he worked at several Michelin-starred restaurants, including &moshik (formally &Samhoud Places). Having recently re-



turned to Aruba, Chef Maduro is thrilled to be reunited with his first mentor and hopes to secure Aruba's space on the global map of unique culinary experiences. Similarly, after four years working in the two-Michelin starred restaurant Spectrum, Chef de Partie Moises Ramirez returned home to share his vast experience in formulating recipes with meticulous attention to detail and consistency. Further down the kitchen line, Chef de Partie Alvaro Yi, who has worked at the two-Michelin starred FG Restaurant, is all about expressing himself through cooking and plating to create art that you can eat. Mixologist Marc-Anthony Rannis brings eight years of experience in the fine dining industry to Infini. His fine craftsmanship is displayed in the unparalleled wine pairings and signature cocktails, which include his personally homemade syrups, garnishes and fresh local ingredients. Maître D' and Junior Sommelier Jessica Theysen, who previously



managed renowned Chef Dennis Huwaë's Restaurant Daalder in Amsterdam, is a true storyteller. From the moment she serves the Salinity welcome drink and the culinary tale begins, she takes you on an adventure around the world to discover never-before-tasted combinations. Then, towards the end of the night, it is his time to shine — Pastry Chef Jean-Claude Werleman, that is. After spending the last two years perfecting his recipes in the Pastry Department of the Ritz Carlton Aruba, Werleman joins Infini to continue exploring his passion for experimenting with colors and bold flavors.

"It's time to show that Aruba is a culinary destination of its own"

"The goal is to leave our visitors speechless. The look on their faces whenever they take the first bite says it all and it is priceless", shares Croes, with a smile. Reclaiming the spot of number one restaurant in the Caribbean is also in sight, but this time he will not stop there. "In the end, we want Aruba to be recognized for its culinary mastery. We have trained the best culinary artists right here on the island and they have proven themselves internationally in the most renowned kitchens in the world. Now it is time to show that Aruba is a culinary destination of its own. Who knows where that will take us; hopefully to infinity and beyond."

Infini located at Blue Residences currently serves an eight-course Chef's Impression to up to 21 guests starting at 6:30PM. To make reservations visit www.infiniaruba.com or call +297-699-3982. □



infini
by Urvin Croes



Desperate for workers, U.S. restaurants and stores raise pay

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER**

AP Economic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S.

restaurants and stores are rapidly raising pay in an urgent effort to attract more applicants and keep up with a flood of customers as the pandemic eases.

McDonald's, Sheetz and Chipotle are just some of the latest companies to follow Amazon, Walmart and Costco in boosting wages, in some cases to \$15 an hour or higher.

The pay gains are, of course, a boon to these employees. Restaurants,

bars, hotels and stores remain the lowest-paying industries, and many of their workers ran the risk of contracting COVID-19 on the job over the past

year while white-collar employees were able to work from home. Still, the pay increases could contribute to higher inflation if companies raise prices to cover the additional labor costs. Some businesses, however, could absorb the costs or invest over time in automation to offset higher wages. States and cities are easing business restrictions as COVID-19 deaths and cases plummet, and in places like Florida, Nevada, and Texas, restaurant traffic is above or near pre-pandemic levels, according to OpenTable, a software provider to the industry.

Many companies say they



This Aug. 8, 2018, photo shows logos of McDonald's Chicago flagship restaurant. McDonald's is raising pay at 650 company-owned stores in the U.S. as part of its push to hire thousands of new workers in a tight labor market.

Associated Press

are struggling to find workers. "Customers are coming back faster than restaurants can staff up," said Josh Bivens, research director at the left-leaning Economic Policy Institute. "By raising pay, they are able to get more workers in the door." In April, even as overall hiring slowed, a category that includes restaurants, hotels and entertainment venues hired more new workers than it did the previous month, a sign the extra pay is working.

McDonald's on Thursday said it will raise pay for workers in its 650 company-owned stores to an average of \$15 an hour by

2024. Entry-level employees will make \$11 an hour. The company is urging its 14,000 franchised restaurants to make the same changes. Also on Thursday, Amazon said it will pay new hires \$17 an hour, as it seeks to add 75,000 new workers. The online giant said it is offering a \$100 bonus for new hires who have been vaccinated.

And Sheetz, a mid-Atlantic convenience store chain, said Monday it is giving its 18,000 employees a \$2-an-hour raise and an additional \$1 an hour for the summer.

Across the restaurant industry, the pay gains have

largely returned overall wages to the same growth trend they were on before the pandemic, Bivens said. He expects the increases to climb above that trend in the coming months.

Consumer prices rose 0.3% at restaurants in April, far less than their labor costs that month. That suggests many restaurants are accepting smaller profits rather than passing on the costs to customers, Bivens said. Restaurant prices have risen 3.8% in the past year, which is above pre-pandemic levels.

Worries about higher inflation have dominated financial markets after con-

sumer prices jumped 4.2% in April compared with a year earlier, the biggest gain in 13 years. But the rise was driven largely by soaring used car prices and more expensive airline tickets, not higher labor costs. In a sign that companies in general are struggling to add workers, the number of available jobs in the U.S. shot to 8.2 million at the end of March. Yet employers added just 266,000 jobs in April, far fewer than the previous month.

Some of the unemployed are reluctant to return to work for fear of contracting COVID-19, while many women have left the workforce to take care of children who are still in online school. Because of an extra \$300 in unemployment aid, some of the jobless are receiving more in benefits than they earned at their old jobs.

Gad Levanon, a labor economist at the Conference Board, a business research group, said labor shortages will probably be temporary, which suggests pay won't necessarily keep rising at the same pace.

"The fear of COVID is probably going to decline, schools are probably going to open in September, the extra unemployment benefits will end in September," he said. "So we will see some easing in labor shortages." □

Bitcoin slips below \$50k after Musk says Tesla won't take it

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The price of bitcoin fell below \$50,000 Thursday morning after Tesla CEO Elon Musk tweeted a day earlier that the electric car maker would stop accepting the digital currency as payment for its vehicles.

Musk on Wednesday cited environmental concerns for the change in policy.

"We are concerned about rapid increasing use of fossil fuels for Bitcoin mining and transactions, especially coal, which has the worst emissions of any fuel," Musk said on Twitter.

He added that cryptocurrency is a "good idea on many levels" but its promise cannot come at a "great cost to the environment."

The price of bitcoin slipped to \$49,880 in morning trading Thursday, the first time it's been below \$50,000 since early March. Tesla shares were poised for gains early Thursday after falling 4.4% on Wednesday.

Tesla said in February that it had invested around \$1.5 billion in Bitcoin and it planned to begin accepting the digital currency as

payment "soon." The fair market value of Tesla's Bitcoin holdings as of March 31 was \$2.48 billion, according to securities filings. Bitcoin relies on computers, which rely on electricity, to exist. The number of computers and the energy needed to power them is rising — the growing value of bitcoin is directly tied to the amount of energy it uses.

Bitcoin miners unlock bitcoins by solving complex, unique puzzles. As the value of bitcoin goes up, the puzzles become increasingly more difficult, and it



In this March 9, 2020, file photo, Tesla and SpaceX Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk speaks at the SATELLITE Conference and Exhibition in Washington.

Associated Press

requires more computer power to solve them. Estimates on how much energy Bitcoin uses vary. □

Florida takes step toward the catching of goliath grouper

By **TERRY SPENCER**

Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)

— A divided board of Florida game regulators took a tentative step Wednesday



In this Monday, Nov. 5, 2018 photo, released by the Mote Marine Laboratory, a Goliath Grouper swims at Mote Aquarium in Sarasota, Fla.

a nuisance and told commissioners they want to hunt it on spearfishing trips, while others saw the fish as photogenic and said it should be protected.

The goliath is popular with both spearfishers and photographers as it does not flee when divers approach. Dick Kempton, a member of the St. Pete Underwater Club, spoke in support of the harvest plan, saying the fish is becoming too plentiful in the waters around Tampa Bay and that is impacting other species.

"There are goliath grouper everywhere," Kempton said, especially at shipwrecks and other underwater structures. "They eat everything that comes by ... There is plenty of stock out there. A limited harvest is not going to affect that at all."

But Tom Ingram, president of the Diving Equipment & Marketing Association, said the goliath draws divers to the state who simply want to see and photograph them. He said it will take at least another 10 years for the goliath to recover.

"Goliath grouper are still considered vulnerable by the International Union of Conservation of Nature," Ingram said.

He asked the commission to implement a permanent ban on the catching of goliaths, saying they are as important to the economy as manatees, which are protected.

The proposal as currently envisioned would limit the size of goliaths that could be killed to a range of 4 to 6.5 feet (1.2 to 2 meters) and 70 to 200 pounds (32 to 90 kilograms) — that's a young adult of 7 to 10 years. Older fish are high in the neurotoxin methylmercury, which is especially dangerous to children and pregnant women.

Outside that range they would be released, just like all goliaths caught now are supposed to be, though poaching is a problem. Goliaths have a lifespan of 35 years or more. Fishing would also remain banned during their spawning season of July to September and at their spawning spots. □

CROSSWORD

By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

- ACROSS**
- 36 "My Fair Lady" role
 - 1 Capital of Italy
 - 5 Citi Field team
 - 9 Fill with joy
 - 11 Muse of poetry
 - 13 — Peak
 - 14 Writer Conrad
 - 15 Eden name
 - 16 Band performance
 - 18 Class offerings
 - 20 Sailor's place
 - 21 Put away
 - 22 Cease
 - 23 Bowler, e.g.
 - 24 "Well, that's obvious!"
 - 25 Dance bit
 - 27 Sneaker parts
 - 29 Luggage ID
 - 30 Acting companies
 - 32 Tad's dad
 - 34 Tear
 - 35 Andean animal

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Yesterday's answer

- DOWN**
- 7 Wins
 - 8 Sound
 - 10 Chaperone
 - 12 Available
 - 17 Individual
 - 19 Shower
 - 22 Enterprise
 - 24 Sure
 - 25 Barn
 - 26 Put off
 - 27 Mrs., in
 - 28 Confiscates
 - 30 Express
 - 31 Bridges
 - 33 Writer Oz
 - 37 High hit

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5-14

AXYDLBAAXR
is **LONGFELLOW**

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-14

CRYPTOQUOTE

J H T U G P J H I G E N D X Q W U
Z N M U X J L U Y V P R E J H I A V J H P
Q M K N M Y V P R E J H I I M V G G
I M N Y J C K N D Y V H P
U O R J P U Z U H P ... I N P N X V G

T U I V G. — A V D X G V Z D U X G N H

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IF WE DON'T CHANGE, WE DON'T GROW. IF WE DON'T GROW, WE AREN'T REALLY LIVING. — GAIL SHEEHY

that might eventually allow fishermen to catch and kill goliath groupers, a fish that was almost driven to extinction 30 years ago by overfishing and pollution. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission told its staff to craft a regulation it has proposed that would allow 100 goliaths to be caught and kept annually during a four-year period.

Supported by fishing groups, the proposed limited harvest calls for a lottery to issue \$300-per-week licenses that allow each recipient to catch and kill one goliath, with proceeds funding research of the species.

But board members said that did not mean the regulation would ultimately be approved even over the next few years, saying the science may not support its quick adoption.

There were questions about whether the fish, which typically weigh 400 pounds (180 kilograms) but can exceed 800 pounds (360 kilograms), has seen its population sufficiently recover. The commissioners did, however, seem to oppose a permanent ban, saying a harvest should be allowed eventually. Goliath grouper is not allowed to be caught in any other state or federal waters.

Commissioner Robert Spottswood believes the population is getting near a point where a limited harvest can be allowed. He said many of the arguments against a harvest are based on emotion. While

the species' population is unknown, the commission's staff believes it has grown enough to allow the limited catch.

"We can't just be stuck because there is a philosophy out there that says this big lovable creature can never be taken again," Spottswood said during the Tallahassee meeting.

But Commissioner Gary Nicklaus said the reports that the goliaths' population is nearing recovery is based upon where it was when it was close to extinction, not when it was abundant in the 1950s. He said the biggest economic benefit the goliath provides to the state is drawing scuba divers who want to swim with it and photograph it.

"I think we should protect it until its population comes back to whatever baseline we want that to be," said Nicklaus, the son of retired pro golfer Jack Nicklaus.

The goliath once ranged over a wide swath of ocean territory, from the Carolinas to the Caribbean and the Atlantic Ocean off Brazil. But its numbers dropped sharply starting in the 1960s. By 1990, when Florida banned its catch, it was almost gone because of overfishing.

Today, the goliath is found mainly off South Florida. Adults live in reefs and shipwrecks, digging holes that provide hiding spaces for other fish.

Public comment to the board was about equally divided Wednesday.

A prime example was scuba divers — some called it

Classifieds

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Stars of 'Shrill' express love for the 'hippest of places'

By **BROOKE LEFFERTS**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — As "Shrill" draws to a close, its stars and creators are reflecting on how important Portland, Oregon, became to the Hulu comedy series, and how much of the city's originality and beauty they were able to showcase.

"Probably my favorite part of making the show is going to Portland every year and using that to build the story around," said Aidy Bryant, who stars in the show as Annie, a young woman trying to navigate career and relationships and find her voice.

Locals may recognize shots of the Willamette River, the Fifty Licks ice cream shop and Portland's White House bed and breakfast. Set designers took over the Portland nightclub Holocene — shut down due to COVID-19 — and created a hair salon where Annie's roommate, Fran, worked.

Portland and its people have been key to the vibe of "Shrill," which began streaming its third and final season on Friday.

The series is based on Seattle native Lindy West's memoir, "Shrill: Notes from a Loud Woman."

"I feel very rooted in the Pacific Northwest and it was a dream of mine to shoot this show in the Pacific Northwest. I'm just so elated that we got to do



This image released by Hulu shows Lolly Adefope, left, and Aidy Bryant in a scene from the Portland-set comedy series "Shrill."

that. And Portland was such an incredible home for us," said West, who is also an executive producer on the show. "Portland's not exactly Seattle, but it still feels like home to me in a way that the rest of the country doesn't. And it's so physically, so geographically beautiful ... there's water everywhere and it's green and it's a really special place."

"Shrill" has highlighted not only some of Portland's cool neighborhoods but the area's stunning beaches, like a recent getaway episode filmed at an oceanside home in Man-

zanita. The ranch where Annie goes to interview a separatist family is actually the Coleman Guest Ranch in Molalla, roughly an hour south of Portland.

"There's a beautiful beach and a forest and there's just so many pieces. It kind of... just holds all these little worlds within it and I love that," said Bryant, a two-time Emmy nominee for her work on "Saturday Night Live," who is also a writer and executive producer on "Shrill."

Portland became the show's backdrop thanks to, as Bryant describes it, a "weird fluke." The show's

producers include Elizabeth Banks and Bryant's "Saturday Night Live" boss, Lorne Michaels, who also produced "Portlandia." Just as that show was ending, "Shrill" was starting.

"It was sort of this natural like, 'Oh, well, we could take over this crew and this awesome setup that's been working together for so long,'" Bryant said.

Having a locally based crew meant finding hidden gems of the city to shoot scenes. In season two, the production designer suggested shooting at an old amusement park at Oaks Park, so the writers wrote

a birthday party scene around it.

It's not just the landscape but also the Oregon vibe that attracted the production team. "I like the mix of people. It literally has like the most extreme political point of view, from both ends," said showrunner Ali Rushfield. "I don't know that I've been in a city where you walk down the streets and feel that."

Actor John Cameron Mitchell who plays Annie's boss, says he's loved Portland since he started going there in the 1990s and discovered it was the "hippest of places."

"It was just like so cool and everyone was acting like they weren't cool, but they were, which made them cooler and scarier. Because they were so casual — as opposed to LA, where people make sure you know that they're cool, which can be very annoying," Mitchell said with a laugh.

While Bryant is sad to leave Oregon behind, she says it's not goodbye.

"I love filming in Oregon. I would go back there in a heartbeat. I'm planning to go back there this summer just because I love it," Bryant said. "They have really made this amazing film community there and it was such a joy to be there in this beautiful, beautiful setting." □

Chrissy Teigen apologizes to Courtney Stodden for harassment



Chrissy Teigen appears at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party in Beverly Hills, Calif. on Feb. 9, 2020, left, and Courtney Stodden appears at the 5th Annual Streamy Awards in Los Angeles on Sept. 17, 2015.

Associated Press

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Chrissy Teigen has apologized for harassing a then-teenage Courtney Stodden online years ago.

"Not a lot of people are lucky enough to be held accountable for all their past (expletive) in front of the entire world. I'm mortified and sad at who I used to be. I was an insecure, attention seeking troll," Teigen tweeted Wednesday in a long thread.

She continued: "I have worked so hard to give you guys joy and be beloved and the feeling of letting you down is nearly unbear-

able, truly. These were not my only mistakes and surely won't be my last as hard as I try but god I will try!!"

The 35-year-old Teigen, with more than 13 million followers on Twitter, was in her mid-20s when she harassed Stodden. That included tweets urging Stodden to end their life. Stodden is a reality TV personality who identifies as non-binary and uses the pronoun "they."

Stodden told the Daily Beast that Teigen's harassment and that of many others came as they faced intense media criticism at age 16 for marrying 51-year-old Doug Hutchi-

son in 2011. The two divorced last year. The marriage led to international fame for the young model and singer-songwriter from Washington state, including TV appearances on "Celebrity Big Brother" and her own "Courtney."

Stodden accepted Teigen's apology in a post on Instagram, with reservations.

"All of me wants to believe this is a sincere apology, but it feels like a public attempt to save her partnerships with Target and other brands who are realizing her 'wokeness' is a broken record," Stodden said. □



Kareem Abdul-Jabbar arrives at WE Day California at The Forum on Thursday, April 25, 2019, in Inglewood, Calif.

Associated Press

NBA creates social justice award, named for Abdul-Jabbar

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar appreciates what today's NBA players are doing in their attempts to make the world better, how they're using their voices and platforms as conduits for change.

And going forward, one of those players will be rewarded by a trophy bearing Abdul-Jabbar's name.

The NBA announced Thursday the creation of a new award — the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Social Justice Champion Award — to recognize players who are making strides in the fight for social justice. Each NBA team will nominate one player for consideration; from there, five finalists will be selected and ultimately one winner.

"I'm really proud of what the NBA has been doing all along in terms of activism and their efforts for equality and inclusion," Abdul-Jabbar said in an interview with The Associated Press. "I think they've done a great job. I've always felt that was something important and teaming up with them to be involved in this award is very meaningful."

The winning player will receive \$100,000 for the charity of his choice; the other four finalists will receive \$25,000 apiece, also for charity.

"In addition to being one of our greatest players, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar has devoted much of his life to advocating for equality and social justice," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said in a release announcing the award's creation. "With this new award, we are proud to recognize and celebrate NBA players who are using their influence to make an impact on their communities and our broader society."

Abdul-Jabbar has spent most of his life as an activist in one form or another. He met Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for the first time as a 17-year-old. He famously attended what was called The Cleveland Summit in June 1967 where he, Bill Russell, Jim Brown and other prominent Black athletes came together to talk with Muhammad Ali about his being a conscientious objector to the Vietnam War. He has worked to help economically depressed areas improve schools as well.

Being involved was in his blood, Abdul-Jabbar said. His great-uncle, John Alcindor, was a physician in England during World War I — treating war veterans for free and becoming known as the "Black Doctor of Paddington."

"I think it's just really a family tradition and something that makes sense," Abdul-Jabbar said. "When you see something wrong you have to speak out about it and try to effect some change." □



Spain's Rafael Nadal celebrates after beating Canada's Denis Shapovalov, in their 3rd round match at the Italian Open tennis tournament, in Rome, Thursday, May 13, 2021. Nadal won 6-3, 4-6, 6-7.

Associated Press

Never count him out: Nadal rallies past Shapovalov in Rome

By ANDREW DAMPF
AP Sports Writer

ROME (AP) — When it comes to long, grueling clay-court battles, nobody is better than Rafael Nadal. Nearing his 35th birthday, the Spanish great showed he's still got the stamina to withstand much younger challengers in a 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (3) comeback win over 22-year-old Denis Shapovalov on Thursday that secured him a spot in the Italian Open quarterfinals.

Nadal roared back from 3-0 down in the second set and then saved two match points on his serve at 6-5 in the third.

It seems — and it's been this way since Nadal started dominating back in 2005 — that the Spaniard gets tougher and tougher to beat the longer matches wear on.

"That's why he's won so many matches on clay," Shapovalov said. "It's not the first time Rafa's done this. I'm not the first person to lose with match points. He does well with the pressure in those moments."

Nadal, who will be aiming for a record-extending 14th French Open title next month, was also pushed at times in a straight-set win over 19-year-old Jan-nik Sinner that ended late

Wednesday. Then there was his long three-set victory over Stefanos Tsitsipas — another 22-year-old — in the Barcelona Open final last month.

"To be able to win these kind of matches against young players give me confidence with my body," Nadal said.

Nadal struggled to hold serve at the start, while Shapovalov was blasting aces and winners with his one-handed backhand. Nadal dug in, though, and started to win the longer rallies.

Shapovalov missed a backhand to conclude a long rally on his first match point then shanked a forehand on his second. A costly double-fault handed Nadal a 3-1 lead in the tie-breaker and the Spaniard quickly closed it out after 3 hours, 27 minutes.

Nadal, a nine-time champion in Rome, will next face Alexander Zverev, the 2017 Rome champion and the winner of last week's Madrid Open.

Zverev also won in a comeback, beating Kei Nishikori 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

"I have to do things better for tomorrow," Nadal said. Earlier, top-ranked Novak Djokovic seemed to enjoy every moment of his 6-2, 6-1 win over Spanish quali-

fier Alejandro Davidovich Fokina. Djokovic will next face Tsitsipas, who eliminated Matteo Berrettini 7-6 (3), 6-2 in a matchup of top-10 players. "It's going to be a battle," said Djokovic, who has reached the quarterfinals in each of his 15 Rome appearances.

After spectators were banned from the opening rounds because of the coronavirus pandemic, capacity was at 25% as part of the Italian government's re-opening plan.

"I missed the crowd as much as anybody else — one of the biggest reasons why I keep on playing," Djokovic said.

A five-time champion in Rome — with his last title coming in September when the tournament was moved amid the pandemic — Djokovic has had a rough start to the clay season.

He lost in the third round to Daniel Evans in Monte Carlo followed by a defeat to Aslan Karatsev in the semifinals of his home tournament, the Belgrade Open.

Djokovic said he played "at least 20-30% better" than he did against Taylor Fritz in his opening match in Rome.

"So I'm on a good trajectory," he added. □

NFL schedules get off to strong starts with Week 1 twinbills

By **JOE REEDY**
AP Sports Writer

An additional week of regular-season games will benefit NFL fans right from the start.

In order to keep an equal number of doubleheaders between CBS and Fox, the league has decided to make Week 1 a doubleheader for both networks, which is also what they do on the final week.

Blake Jones of the league's scheduling department said the success of the doubleheaders during the final week was one of the driving forces behind adding it to the opening week. It also means Fox and CBS will each have 10 doubleheaders during the season. "It is an amazing amount of football and everyone gets



Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady throws against the Kansas City Chiefs during the first half of the NFL Super Bowl 55 football game in Tampa, Fla., in this Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021, file photo.

Associated Press

four games (two each on Fox and CBS)," Jones said. "It is also not favoring one network over the other. Both can showcase their games and give our fans

something special." The featured games in the 4:25 p.m. window on Sept. 12 will be Green Bay at New Orleans on Fox and Cleveland at Kansas City

on NBC. Fox has traditionally had the Week 1 doubleheader, but Fox Sports executive vice president Michael Mulvihill doesn't mind sharing the day.

"It is a fun way for the season to start. It's really a feast," he said.

Jones said the scheduling department did deep dives on close to 500 combinations that were run through the league servers before narrowing it down the last couple weeks. It wasn't until last Saturday evening that the final schedule was presented to Commissioner Roger Goodell and signed off on.

The final schedule this season was number 102,846 from Server 2020Controller03-4XLarge, which is based somewhere in

Europe. Jones said the league announcing a schedule release date in advance created some pressure, but nothing extra compared to previous years.

"It is healthy, realistic pressure. We haven't announced a date in previous years, but we have been working under target days for so many years," he said.

"We had been talking about when the extra game was going to be added for a few years so we already had the framework and were able to hit the ground running."

Here are other takeaways from the networks about their packages:

GRAND OPENINGS (AGAIN)

Los Angeles' SoFi Stadium and Las Vegas' Allegiant Stadium were in the spotlight when they opened last season, but both will get star billing again with fans finally being allowed in the buildings.

The Rams opener against Chicago is the NBC Sunday night game on Week 1 while the Raiders will host Baltimore to kick off this season's "Monday Night Football" package on ESPN and ABC.

ESPN executive vice president of programming Burke Magnus said they requested giving Vegas another chance to have a proper opener.

"To put Baltimore there with Lamar Jackson, that's two good teams and we get a chance to showcase Vegas," he said.

The SoFi showcase also gives NBC a prime opportunity to promote itself as the Super Bowl network since the season will end in Los Angeles on Feb. 13, 2022.

THE RODGERS COMMUNDRUM

Green Bay will be featured on Fox 11 times — including Christmas Day against Cleveland — along with two Sunday night games on NBC and a Monday night appearance.

Whether or not that includes Aaron Rodgers as the Packers quarterback remains to be seen. □

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